

ANNUAL REPORT

**SOUTH CAROLINA
COMMISSION
FOR THE BLIND**

FISCAL YEAR 1981-1982



**Printed Under the Direction of the
State Budget and Control Board**

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The South Carolina Commission for the Blind is in compliance with the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and all requirements imposed pursuant thereto to the end that no person shall, on the grounds of sex, race, age, color, national origin, or handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the provision of any care or service. Any client participant, potential client, or interested person who is of an opinion that benefits are provided on a discriminatory basis has the right to file a complaint with the State Agency or Federal Agency, or both.

Respectfully Submitted,
S.C. Commission for the Blind
Marilyn K. Bowler

September 1, 1982

LEGAL BLINDNESS QUALIFICATIONS

1. Legal blindness shall be defined as a level of central visual acuity, 20/200 or less in the better eye with the best corrective lens available, or a disqualifying field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than twenty degrees and which is sufficient to incapacitate one for self-support, or an 80% loss of visual efficiency resulting from visual impairment in more than one function of the eye, including visual acuity for distance and near visual fields, ocular mobility, and other ocular functions and disturbances.
2. "Severe visual disability" is defined as any progressive pathological condition of the eye or eyes supported by an acceptable eye examination, which in the opinion of the examiner may or will result in legal blindness within 24 months.

The Honorable Richard W. Riley
Governor of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina

Dear Governor Riley:

There is a sense of pride and a sense of loss among the employees of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind when we reflect on Fiscal Year 1981-1982. We accomplished much and delivered services in as efficient a manner as possible. Response from our clients was rewarding. Yet, we were forced to curtail some direct services, and we lost some dedicated employees in budget reductions ordered by the Budget and Control Board.

These changes deeply affected our "family"; however, we continued to serve our population in a professional and commendable fashion. Staff members assumed more responsibilities, and clients reluctantly accepted the news there would be less to receive in the future.

We withstood the changes of Fiscal Year 1982 with the understanding times could be worse. Our "family" became a more united body in the face of austerity. The future of health services for blind South Carolinians does not look promising, but together we will do our very best to serve those in need.

Respectfully Submitted,
S.C. Commission for the Blind
Maxine R. Bowles

COMMISSION BOARD

1. Mr. Allan C. MustardColumbia
(Chairman - 2nd Congressional District)
2. Clay W. Evatt, Jr., M.D.Charleston
(Vice-Chairman - 1st Congressional District)
3. Mrs. Earlene Gardner Aiken
(Secretary - 3rd Congressional District)
4. Mr. Robert R. Bell Laurens
(5th Congressional District)
5. Mrs. Mattie B. GatlinNorth Charleston
(Member-at-Large)
6. Mrs. Patricia L. PatrickDarlington
(6th Congressional District)
7. Mr. Samuel L. Zimmerman Greenville
(4th Congressional District)

ADMINISTRATION

There was no alternative for the ADMINISTRATION of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) during Fiscal Year 1981-1982 but to do its best in times of budget cutbacks and greater demands for services from clients. The year was not as bad as it could have been, yet the pains of austerity were felt throughout the Agency.

A decision was made in the Fall of 1981 to close two of the Commission's district offices as part of a move to save money. The closing of the Aiken and Anderson offices resulted in job terminations for five employees—two vocational rehabilitation counselors, two counselor assistants and one medical social worker. Case files and records were divided among other regional offices, and the work load was spread so as not to overburden any one counselor.

In a related move, the Rock Hill district office was moved into the Department of Social Services Building in York in order to cut costs and to work with the Reorganization Commission in its co-location efforts.

There were closings of another form in Spartanburg County. Two Business Enterprise vending stands employing four people at Spartanburg Technical College were closed by school officials despite objections of the SCCB, the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina and interested citizens. The school stated a poll taken of the student population indicated a desire for hot foods that could not be supplied by the vending stands. A civil suit was filed by the Commission for the Blind in an effort to halt the closings, but was dismissed by a circuit judge on the grounds the technical school had the right, under the signed contracts, to shut down the stands with prior notification to the Commission and the stand workers.

Not all was bad news for the Administration and the SCCB during Fiscal Year 1981-1982. A structural change in the Administration led to the elimination of the Deputy Commissioner's position, but resulted in the placement of another vocational rehabilitation counselor in direct contact with clients. This counselor began work on a caseload left divided among other counselors by the resignation of a worker earlier in the year.

Fiscal Year 1982 was fairly stable in terms of Commission personnel. Data collected showed the employee turnover rate was a low eight percent. During the year, there were three necessary hirings, 11 employees leaving on their own accord and one medical

retirement. Training opportunities for the staff numbered 117. As of June 30, 1982, there were 111 full-time employees and one part-time employee on the Agency's payroll.

Three Commission Board members were reappointed by Governor Richard W. Riley. Messers Robert R. Bell and Samuel Zimmerman, along with Dr. Clay W. Evatt, Jr., were chosen to serve for another four years on the seven-member board. The Board itself elected new officers for the year; Allan C. Mustard was named Chairman, Dr. Evatt as Vice-Chairman and Mrs. Earlene S. Gardner as Secretary.

There were elections to fill vacancies on two adjunct boards. Ernest Gallman of Columbia was selected to serve as a member-at-large on the Consumer Advisory Board. Also elected to that body were Ruby Johnson, representing the Fourth Congressional District, and Loraine Robinson, a junior at the University of South Carolina, chosen to serve as a student representative. Dr. Isam Zakhour was appointed to serve on the Medical Advisory Board as a replacement for Dr. D.M. Kane, who moved to Pennsylvania.

Commissioner Maxine R. Bowles was honored by the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina at their annual convention in August. She was recognized for her "meritorious service to the blind for a decade and a half" with the presentation of the Distinguished Service Award by the organization. This is the highest honor the Federation bestows on a sighted person.

Highlights of other divisions of the Administration included the completion of an automated Leave Records System by the Data Unit. The Unit also developed a computerized inventory system for the Business Enterprise Program, and continued work on the design of the SCCB's Client Information System.

The Public Information Office increased public education campaigns on blindness and the services of the SCCB through the use of public service announcements on radio and television, and through the placement of feature articles in newspapers and magazines, some of which were out of state publications of major industrial firms. The results of the campaigns were evident in the amount of calls received on the Office's Toll-Free Information telephone line. A total of 2,658 calls were recorded for the fiscal year, a ten percent increase.

The Administration continued to work with organizations and associations for the betterment of the blind population. Activities

ranged from speeches and demonstrations at health fairs and conventions to garage sales and bake sales to raise money.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Vocational Rehabilitation is a physical and mental process by which the blind and visually impaired are assisted in finding and maintaining employment. Vocational rehabilitation counselors from the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) attempt to identify problems that prevent a blind person from obtaining employment, and, through an Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program (IWRP), attempt to secure gainful employment for the client. In achieving his or her goal of employment, the client has access to a variety of vocational rehabilitation services, including job development and job placement; medical treatment; psychological and vocational evaluation; adjustment to blindness training; vocational training, occupational tools and facilities; and, specialized counseling and guidance services.

The daily lives of hundreds of legally blind and visually impaired individuals were touched by the VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT during Fiscal Year 1981-1982, especially the lives of those clients involved in the Commission's Outreach Programs. These community programs afforded numerous clients an opportunity to learn daily living skills without having to travel to distant facilities specializing in such training. The techniques of organizing and maintaining a home, of refining personal hygiene skills, and of proper mobility and cane travel were made available by expert teachers traveling many miles to take their knowledge to those in need.

Outreach programs were conducted in Florence, Sumter, Aiken, Charleston, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, Pickens, Spartanburg, Gaffney and Blacksburg during the year. Each program focused on necessary daily living skills, and placed special emphasis on particular needs of the dozen or so clients enrolled at each location. For instance, clients in Charleston and Greenville were taught how to travel safely with a long white cane, yet those in Charleston were given instructions on how to cook on an electric stove while those in Greenville may have learned to cook on a gas range.

These Outreach Programs received much publicity throughout the year, and word-of-mouth advertising among friends and families resulting in waiting lists of prospective clients being kept by the outreach workers. Some clients returned to a later program in their area for additional training and brought friends with them, even

family members to share in the new experiences of being independent.



Mobility is a key factor in the independence of a legally blind individual. Mobility Specialist Ed Robinson observes as his student, Charles McMahon, practices the proper technique for traveling with a white cane. Mobility instructions are part of the Vocational Rehabilitation Department's Outreach Programs.



Home Instructor Patricia Tuck checks a braille alphabet learning board to make sure her student has correctly made the braille symbol for the letter "h" Braille is one of many daily living skills offered by the Outreach Programs.

All things considered, the Vocational Rehabilitation Outreach Programs were the star performers of the Department, and plans for

the upcoming fiscal year included new locations and more intensified training to meet the demands of the client population.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Department, through outreach programs and other direct contacts, served 1,336 clients during Fiscal Year 1981-1982. Approximately 95 percent of these clients met the federal definition of "severely disabled", and a total of 211 individuals were successfully rehabilitated and placed in gainful employment during the year. These clients were trained for jobs as clerical workers, computer programmers, production workers, counselors, farmers, kitchen helpers, and homebound workers.

An example of a type of case served by the Department was that of a 23-year-old man. This young man had no usable vision and came from a family of eleven children who were living at the state's poverty level. The client was accepted into the program and received specialized evaluation and training at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center that included mobility and home management skills. Through the efforts of his counselor, a production job was developed for the client with a local industry. The client was placed on the job after being provided with special orientation to the plant's physical layout and work area. His performance surpassed expectations of the manufacturing company and the counselor, and he reached a point of personal and financial independence. As a result of his success, the company agreed to hire another legally blind worker, a statement itself of the confidence placed in qualified blind workers.

In other areas of concern, emphasis was placed on utilizing and coordinating similar benefits that might be available to clients. Financial limitations on the Department necessitated searches for additional sources of aid, such as private health insurance, scholarships, Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income benefits. During the fiscal year, the Disability Determination Unit processed 686 applications for Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits. Of those, 44 percent were allowed cash payments. All claims were screened for referral to other departments in the SCCB for possible services and guidance.

The ELLEN BEACH MACK REHABILITATION CENTER adjusted fairly well to the fiscal year's budget cuts, despite the fact the Center was able to plan only from quarter to quarter. Although last year's financial cuts did not directly affect the program, that was not the story in Fiscal Year 1981-1982. The lack of case service funds halted all community recreation activities, and forced the end of the

Visual Arts Program, a joint effort of the SCCB and the Art Department of the University of South Carolina.



Robert Shaw, a legally blind employee of the E.G.&G. Rotron manufacturing plant in Orangeburg, operates a machine press as part of his job in making electric fans. Shaw was successfully placed in the job by the Vocational Rehabilitation Department of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind.

On the positive side, the Center developed an agreement to provide vocational evaluation services for the blind that were acceptable to the Job Service division of the South Carolina Employment Security Commission. A computer terminal was installed in the Center in order to provide instant access to all Job Service information.

Staff development continued at the Center. All staff members participated in simulated personal/vocational adjustment under a blindfold. This was done to help the staff appreciate the circumstances and anxiety each client feels when first arriving at the Center. This experience also provided an opportunity for workers to better understand each area within the Center, and to offer constructive criticism as to the area's daily operation. As a follow-up, an in-service class met at the end of each week to further discuss the implication of blindness and adjustment on the part of the client, and to develop better communication and educational skills.

The Center's Deaf/Blind Unit conducted several workshops for

professionals in the field of deaf/blind interpretation and communication. These workshops featured speakers from national centers for the deaf/blind, and presentations from local organizations and facilities.

Legally blind high schoolers from across the state attended the fourth annual summer program for blind students at the Center. Twenty-two students experienced living away from home, vocational skills and post-graduation possibilities in the job market and in the field of higher learning. This program has proven popular, increasing in magnitude and diversity each year.



The South Carolina Commission for the Blind's Business Enterprise Program supervises the operation of over 85 vending stands across the state. These stands are managed by legally blind individuals who have successfully completed the vending stand training program. Here, Mark Craft, a stand operator in the Public Services Building in Florence, restocks his shelves with a fresh supply of cakes, candies and crackers.

On a note of special accomplishment, the recreation instructor, who also works as a vocational teacher, won three medals for athletic achievement at the National Championship Games of the Blind Athletes Association in Austin, Texas. The instructor was part of a five athlete team from South Carolina, and won gold medals in the 50 meter freestyle swim and the high jump. He placed second in the javelin throw.

A downturn in the State's economy adversely affected the

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM of the SCCB, resulting in the closing of several private locations. Three canteens were also closed by state technical education colleges over objections of the SCCB and the stand operators. The Business Enterprise Program functions to provide public and private locations with quality food service and to offer remunerative employment for the State's legally blind and visually impaired.

Even with the budgetary problems cited above, the vending facility program generated a record sales volume of \$3,363,711.22 during Fiscal Year 1981-1982. Sales taxes in the amount of \$131,242.84 were paid by blind licensed vendors. The total number of stands operating at the end of the fiscal year was 82. Average monthly net earnings in federal stands were \$1,115; in state, county and municipal stands \$1,038; in private locations \$711; and, in seasonal (state parks) stands \$1,069.

BLINDCRAFT provided work for an average of 21 persons a month during Fiscal Year 1981-1982. This work enabled individuals to supplement their monthly income by an average of \$76. Overall sales amounted to \$35,000 in Blindcraft products, and \$5,000 in plants and vegetables from the Horticulture division. Workers received approximately \$20,000 from the total sales; the remainder was used to purchase raw materials and to pay for operating expenses.

At the close of the fiscal year, Blindcraft workers were busy filling orders for the United States Army and United States Air Force Exchanges. These contracts were estimated to total \$10,000 in sales for handmade items. Another contract for \$5,000 with the New York Lighthouse Industries for the Blind was finalized at the end of June. Both orders were to be completed in the fall in time to switch the workers over to making Christmas items.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

The PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS DEPARTMENT of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) is funded entirely by state tax dollars. A Fiscal Year 1981-1982 budget of \$365,000 was disbursed to purchase eye services for the medically indigent not covered by other private, state or government programs. These services included screening and detection of pathologies, eye examinations, visual aids, and follow-up treatments as necessary. A major portion of the services dealt with the area of restoration of sight requiring hospitalization and surgery.

As was the case with other departments in the SCCB, budgetary cutbacks affected services. The counseling and guidance services offered by the program were curtailed due to limited funds for travel, and due to office closings and reassignments of counties. However, the department did the very best possible with the available funds.

Two pathology clinics, one in Orangeburg and the other in Walterboro, were operated during the year and screened 372 people. Surgical procedures necessitated by these clinics were referred to private physicians, the Medical University Hospital in Charleston, or to the University of South Carolina Medical School. A low vision clinic was maintained to assist people with minimal vision. These individuals were screened to help them utilize their residual vision with the use of telescopic devices, hand magnifiers or powerful glasses.

Records show, during the fiscal year, the department sponsored the following surgeries:

185 Cataracts	38 Strabismus
18 Glaucoma	94 others, including laser retinal surgery
11 Enucleations	

Hospitalization costs for the above surgeries totaled \$222,814. Another \$74,062 was spent to pay surgeons, and approximately \$7,000 was authorized for payment for anesthesia. The remaining funds were spent to pay for radiological examinations, laboratory tests, low vision aids and examinations, fitting fees for glasses, and prostheses.

Yet, during Fiscal Year 1981-1982, several physicians graciously provided clients with surgical procedures while the SCCB Prevention Department provided hospitalization.

April 1, 1982, marked the eighth year of existence of the Mobile

Eye-Screening Van. This van, operated in conjunction with the South Carolina Lions Sight Conservation Association, travels the state conducting free screenings for visual acuity and glaucoma. The number of citizens taking advantage of the free service is rapidly approaching 100,000.

SPECIAL SERVICES

The SPECIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) has four components to serve a cross section of South Carolinians from preschoolers to senior citizens. These components are Children's Services, Educational Radio for the Blind, Media Center and Volunteer Services. Through professional expertise and a strong personal commitment to clients, the Department was able to continue providing quality services despite budgetary and personnel cutbacks.

At the close of Fiscal Year 1981-1982, the five Children's Services counselors were serving 345 active cases between the ages of birth and 14. A majority of the time was spent in one-to-one instruction for preschool children and their families. An integral part of that job was working with community-based preschool programs to place blind children into such units. The remainder of time was spent providing guidance and counseling for parents and older visually impaired children, and in offering consultation with various educational programs.

In April, the annual workshop for parents of preschool age blind children was held at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center in Columbia. Twenty-six families from across the state attended. A departmental goal to improve referral systems and to identify children at an earlier stage was enhanced by the turnout at the workshop. Twelve children in attendance were under two years of age.

A prevocational program in Greenville afforded preadolescent clients an opportunity to explore careers through counseling and on-site job visits. The development of independent skills in the area of daily living was an important part of the program. Clemson University Extension Service provided staff to assist in the food preparation, and the Greenville County Schools made available an excellent facility for the project.

The parent newsletter continued as a vital communication link to all families, and was expanded to include instructional materials as well as resource information. With staff reductions and travel limitations, the newsletter insured an open line of communication between the staff and clients. In another area of revision and improvement, the Children's Services Manual was updated to conform to the changing needs of the time and population.

Other notable events of the Children's Services Department included the yearly summer camps for children, family outings and meetings between staff members and groups of parents across the state.

EDUCATIONAL RADIO FOR THE BLIND, a closed circuit radio service, is a cooperative venture of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind and the South Carolina Educational Television and Radio Commission. At the end of the fiscal year, approximately 1,400 blind South Carolinians had access to daily readings of major newspapers and other information of current interest through the special network. Additional receivers, made possible by a \$100,000 grant in May through the South Carolina Educational Television Commission, will enable twice as many listeners to enjoy the programming in the coming fiscal year.

South Carolina Educational Radio for the Blind broadcasts 103 hours each week with the valuable assistance of 50 or more volunteer readers. The network was programming material seven days a week during the fiscal year.



This volunteer reader, Christina Shaner, devotes time each week to record printed materials for delayed broadcast over Educational Radio for the Blind. She is part of a dedicated group of citizens who give freely of their time to help program the 103 hours a week the radio network is on the air.

The staff has maintained close contact with each listener, over the

years, through the SCCB's toll-free telephone line. To further improve services, a survey of all listeners was conducted to determine interests. One program well received was a series known as "Assertiveness Training for the Blind." This program was developed in cooperation with the University of South Carolina Continuing Education Program.

The network continued to reach out and become involved in the community. During Fiscal Year 1981-1982, as in the past, the network covered the state and national conventions of consumer organizations as well as other events thought to be of interest to the listeners.

Educational Radio for the Blind is an innovative and cost effective method of reaching blind individuals across the state with rehabilitative and instructional information, as well as with current news. This is especially important in times of austere budgets.

The SCCB MEDIA CENTER has the responsibility for transcribing printed materials into braille, large type or onto audio tape in order that blind South Carolinians may have access to the information.

Throughout Fiscal Year 1981-1982, the Media Center continued to provide support to the State Department of Education by locating and procuring braille textbooks for the 34 school age braille students in public schools. One-hundred-and-eighty-two braille books were obtained through direct contact with suppliers and other state media centers.

In cooperation with various state, federal and county agencies, the Media Center transcribed applications and information brochures into braille. The South Carolina Department of Social Services, Richland Memorial Hospital, the South Carolina Tax Commission and other agencies are now able to distribute information to their blind clients. The Welcome Centers, operated by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, were provided with a directory of activities in the state for blind visitors to use.

A major braille project for the year was the transcription of the G.E.D. Pre-Test Exam used by the state technical schools for entry into their programs. Blind students can now take the examination with braille instructions, rather than having someone read to them.

The Duxbury Braille Translation System, a component of the Agency computer, was used extensively to make high quality

computer braille available quickly and efficiently. This system proved to be particularly helpful for manuals, agendas and other materials for students and employed individuals.

South Carolinians, through the Media Center, were provided 7,137 braille pages of material by 22 braillists across the United States. In addition, the Media Center utilized volunteers to make available 231 tapes.

Volunteers bring many skills and talents to the South Carolina Commission for the Blind that enhance the quality of all Agency programs.

The VOLUNTEER SERVICES DEPARTMENT, with a paid staff of one, recruited and trained volunteers to perform a variety of jobs within the Agency— radio readers and technicians, private readers, braillists, tapists, clerical assistants, receptionists, child care workers, horticulture assistants, and individuals to handle special assignments on request.

The majority of the volunteers worked in the Educational Radio for the Blind program. More than 50 individuals read on a weekly basis during the fiscal year.

An efficient and accurate system for recording volunteer contributions was developed by the Director of Volunteer Services. One-hundred-and-twenty-one volunteers devoted 7,789 hours of service to the SCCB during the Fiscal Year 1981-1982.

The SCCB provided volunteer opportunities to special populations, including clients of other state agencies. This allowed the Agency to utilize the skills and talents of individuals who might otherwise have been overlooked, and afforded these people a chance to gain experience and to realize the self-fulfillment of helping others.

Volunteers were recognized for their invaluable service through luncheons and other functions by the Agency staff. However, the main reward for service came in the form of favorable comments made about the volunteers by the clients they served.

SOURCES OF FUNDS

FISCAL YEAR 1981 - 1982

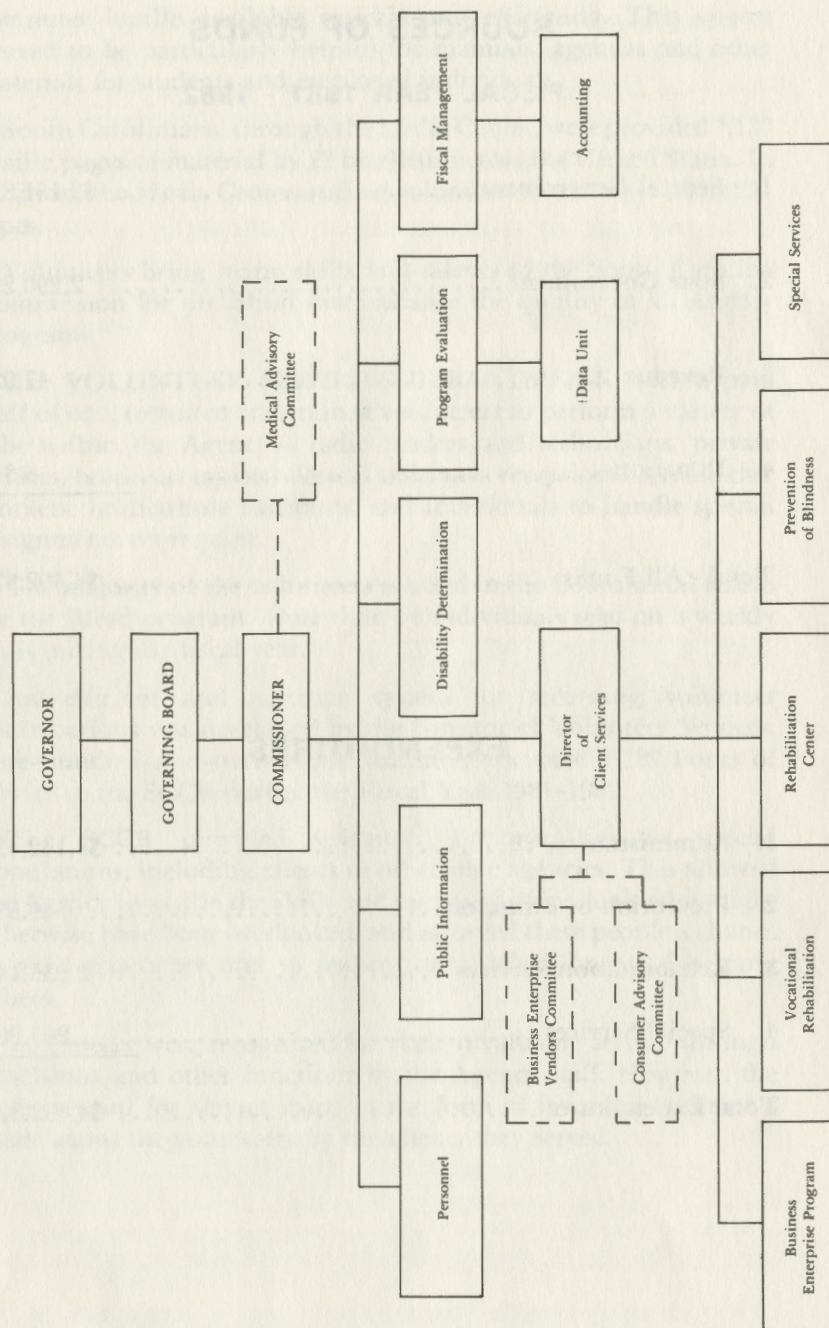
1. Federal Government	\$2,151,832
2. State Government	2,290,201
3. Revenue	47,027
4. Donations	<u>3,316</u>
Total - All Funds	\$4,492,376

EXPENDITURES

1. Administration	\$1,142,436
2. Prevention of Blindness	549,589
3. Rehabilitation Services	2,535,146
4. Special Services	<u>265,205</u>
Total Expenditures	\$4,492,376

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

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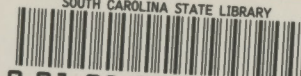


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ASSISTANCE DIRECTORY

Public Information	758-2434
TOLL FREE INFORMATION	1-800-922-2222
Commissioner	758-2595
Director of Client Services	758-3761
Staff Development	758-2596
Personnel	758-2605
Accounting	758-8650
Vocational Rehabilitation	758-2671
Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center	758-5577
Business Enterprise Program	758-5173
Blindcraft	758-2233
Prevention of Blindness	758-3556
Special Services	758-8165
Educational Radio for the Blind	758-7771
Children's Services	758-7050
Media Center	758-5577
Volunteers	758-7050
Disability Determination Unit	758-5357
Data Unit	758-8652

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